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32. OCCURRENCE OF THE CRAB *EUXANTHUS EXSCULPTUS* (HERBST) IN GUJARAT

(With a text-figure)

During the study of the diet of a coastal migratory wader, the Crab Plover *Dromas ardeola* in the Gulf of Kachchh, Gujarat state, one of us (TM) analyzed fragments of the bodies of various crabs in the birds' regurgitated pellets. To facilitate identification of these fragments, a collection of over 500 crabs from the area was made on the Rozi coast (22° 33' N, 70° 02' E), near the Jamnagar port between August 1987 and May 1988. Almost all of these crabs had been recorded earlier from the Gujarat coast by Chhapgar (*J. Bombay nat. Hist. Soc.* 1957, 1958, 1961). There was one exception, namely *Euxanthus exsculptus* (Herbst) (*E. melissa* of Alcock). The width of the carapace was 69 mm.

The crab can be identified by the fairly sharp, irregularly scalloped antero-lateral borders being prolonged beneath the orbit to the buccal cavern, and by

the basal antennal joint jutting into the orbit, so that the antennal flagellum is inside the orbit. There is no denticle at the outer end of the orbit.

The antero-lateral borders are cut into five teeth, with a tubercle between the fourth and fifth teeth. The lobules of the carapace are smooth. The chelipeds are equal in size and the fingers, with strongly toothed cutting edges, have their tips hollowed.

Alcock (1989), recorded this species from the Andaman Islands, Sri Lanka, Mergui and Samoa, while Serene subsequently found it in Tahiti. The present find, therefore, constitutes a first record of this species from the west coast of India.

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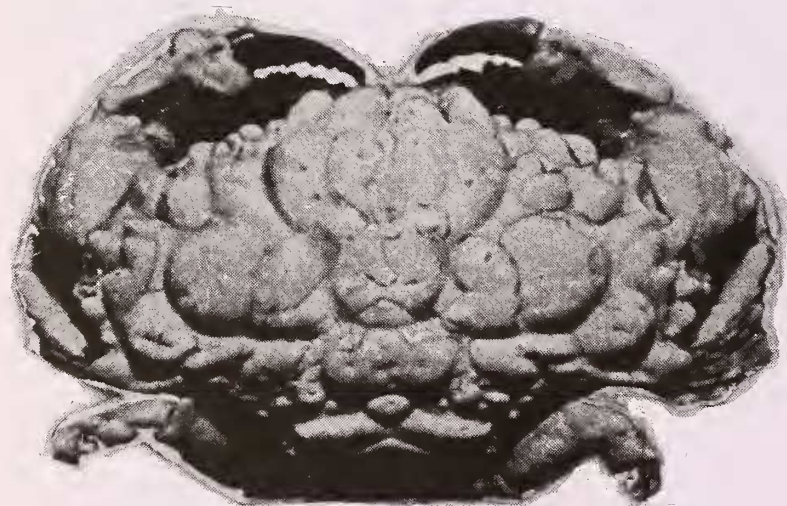


Fig. 1. *Euxanthus exsculptus* (Herbst).